

The High Production Volume Challenge Program and the High Production Volume Information System Database

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Keywords: HPV Challenge Program, HPVIS, public availability of information, information system, hazard information

In 1998, three independent studies confirmed that there were significant gaps in the basic data needed to understand and characterize the potential hazards associated with high production volume (HPV) chemicals. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Environmental Defense (ED), American Petroleum Institute (API), and American Chemistry Council (ACC) joined forces to launch the HPV Challenge Program, a collaborative partnership whose goal was to assure that the American public had access to the type of information that would allow them to actively participate in environmental decision-making at all levels—federal, state, and local. This collection of screening-level hazard data will provide the public with basic information about the chemicals that are produced in the largest quantities.

The public's access to HPV chemical information is the cornerstone of this program. At present, stakeholders and the public can access test plans, data summaries, sponsor commitment information, chemical lists, guidance documents, and a wide range of other materials on the HPV Challenge Program Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/chemrtk>. In 2005, the U.S. EPA plans to launch the HPV Information System (HPVIS), which will provide the public with complete and easy access to critical information on HPV chemicals. The HPVIS will be a comprehensive Web site that will allow a wide range of users to search existing data summary information, test plans, and new data as they are developed.

Due to this highly successful voluntary program, significant progress regarding collection and availability of HPV chemical data has been made since the HPV Challenge Program was launched. Hundreds of companies have committed to participate in the program, often creating partnerships that never existed before. Diverse stakeholders have worked together to build and implement a strong, compelling voluntary program; and over 2,000 chemicals are becoming more widely understood by the Agency, the stakeholders, and, most importantly, the public, who will now have access to meaningful information concerning HPV chemicals.